



Linguistic Rules of

Modern Egyptian

Commonly known as
Colloquial Egyptian

Samy Harak

English Translation

Lina Girgis

First Edition

6265/ 2024

Linguistic Rules
of
Modern Egyptian

Commonly known as “Colloquial Egyptian”

Samy Harak

English Translation

Lina Girgis

First edition 6265/ 2024

Book name: Linguistic Rules of Modern Egyptian

Author: Samy Harak

Registration number: 25911/ 2024

Cover design: Safa Harak

English translation : **Lina Girgis**

Copyright © 2024 by Samy Harak

01016290785/ 01286175455

[samy.harak.9@facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/samy.harak.9)

samy7arak@gmail.com

Preface

I am honored to present in this booklet a summary of the grammatical and phonetic rules of Modern Egyptian language, so it will be beneficial for Egyptians who want to know the rules of their native tongue. It will also prove that what Egyptians speak today is a complete and independent language and a continuation of Ancient Egyptian language.

Modern Egyptian has its own linguistic rules and its many dialects: Qebli in Upper Egypt, Bahari in Lower Egypt, and Qahery in Cairo, etc.

All Egyptian dialects adhere to the same grammar of Modern Egyptian language; the only difference between them is the pronunciation of words, like any dialect of any language in the world.

What Egyptians speak today is not just random gibberish, nor is it a dialect of Arabic.

The Arabic language is one thing, and the Egyptian language is something else.

- Modern Egyptian language is recognized internationally: Registration (ISO 3-2007-369.)
- In addition, all Egyptian songs, plays, screenplays in movies and series are written in Modern Egyptian. Egyptians speak Modern Egyptian at home, on the streets, and even in government

offices. The usage of Arabic language in Egypt is limited to official writing only.

Not only is this booklet useful for foreigners who want to learn Modern Egyptian, but also for Egyptians themselves. Some people claim that the current “colloquial” Egyptian tongue has no rules, although the explanation of these rules has been available since very early on.

- **Qasim Amin**, President of the first Egyptian University, wrote about recognizing Modern Egyptian as an independent language.
- **Ahmed Lotfy Essayed**, Professor of the Generation, wrote a series of articles about that, entitled “Representative of the Nation”, (Mesh5saty Eloumma) in Modern Egyptian.
- **Abdel Aziz Fahmy**, Chief of Judges, and **Salama Musa**, writer and thinker, and many others advocated the same cause.
- Even **Taha Hussein**, Minister of Education, called Modern Egyptian “Our Natural Language,” and wrote numerous articles about it in Al-Gomhuria newspaper in 1959.

However, the specialized explanation of the linguistic rules of Modern Egyptian began with **Ibrahim Anis**—the brilliant linguist—in his PhD thesis - London 1950. **Badr Nashaat**, writer and poet, conducted a study entitled, “The Language of Thinking and Living” - Al-Gomhuria newspaper 1959, Egyptian magazine 1986, and Cairo magazine 1996. **Bayoumi Qandil**, journalist and translator, wrote a long article about it entitled, “The Present Culture in Egypt” - Egyptian magazine 1986, updated and

published it independently in a booklet in 1990, and turned it into a book in 1997, and then published a fourth edition in 2008.

Abaziz Gamal El-Din, writer and historian, also wrote a long article entitled, “Our Contemporary Egyptian Language,” published in an Egyptian magazine, of which he was the editor-in-chief in 1999, and the article was published as an independent booklet in 2011. **Issam Stati**, Egyptian folklore researcher, wrote a large book, in which he explained some of the rules and a huge number of Modern Egyptian words evolved directly from the Coptic stage, entitled: “The Contemporary Egyptian Language”, published by the Community Arts Centres in 2016.

Please note that writing Egyptian in the Nabataean alphabet—the same alphabet of Arabic Language—means excluding some letters which represent sounds that exist in Arabic But does not exist in Egyptian. For example, we replace the letter for the Arabic sound /θ/ as in “thick” with either /s/ as in “sun” or /t/ as in “tree,” depending on the contemporary pronunciation of the word in Modern Egyptian. Another example is, we replace the letter for the Arabic sound /ð/ as in “this” with either /z/ as in “zoo” or /d/ as in “dog,” depending on the contemporary pronunciation of the word in Modern Egyptian. In general, writing Modern Egyptian adheres to the Egyptian phonetic rules only, even when we write it in Nabataean alphabet, as Arabic, or Latin alphabet, as English.

Hopefully, this booklet, which summarizes the grammar and phonetics of our Egyptian language, will make educated Egyptians, who still think they speak Arabic, stop saying, “We are Egyptian, but we speak Arabic.” This statement is incorrect. The truth is, we are Egyptian and we speak Egyptian. Educated Egyptians must differentiate between natural pronunciation and unnatural pronunciation.

When you learn any second language at school, your pronunciation of it is unnatural, like Arabic, English, or French, etc.

But when you speak your mother tongue, your pronunciation is natural because you learned it in your earliest years: When you were in your mother’s womb and after your birth with your mother’s milk. It is the language in which you get angry, dream, think, and love.


Samy Harak


Bermuda 6265 Egyptian, April 2024 AD


Message from the Translator


To translate the grammatical and phonetic rules of Modern Egyptian into English, to compare them with those of Arabic, and to make it understandable to those who are not speakers of Modern Egyptian and do not know Arabic, was a complicated mission. I had to—not only translate—but also explain some of those rules and include equivalent English examples that are simple enough for speakers of all languages who understand English, not just native English speakers.


I used some numerical symbols to represent sounds that exist in Modern Egyptian but has no letters to represent them in Latin alphabet as follows:


 = 2 = ء / أ / ئ


 = 3 = ع

 = 3' = غ

 = 7 = ح

 = 7' = خ

 = š = ش

 = ṣ = ص

Lina Girgis

Bermuda 6265 Egyptian, April 2024 AD

The following is a summary of the linguistic rules of Modern Egyptian, explained in detail in the book “We Speak Egyptian” Part 1, 2, and 3 by Samy Harak, published in 2017, 2022, and 2023.

1 – No parsing in Modern Egyptian:

To parse is to analyze a sentence into its parts and describe the syntactic role of each word.

In Arabic, parsing is necessary, as the word ending changes according to its syntactic role in the sentence, and the pronunciation of the word ending is indicated in writing by the diacritics.

In Modern Egyptian, however, there is no need for parsing or diacritics. Egyptians can never make mistakes when they speak their mother tongue, but because they write it in different alphabets: Latin or Nabataean—as it has not been agreed on a unique alphabet for Modern Egyptian yet—mistakes may happen in writing.

2 – Analytic language:

Modern Egyptian is an analytic language, whereas Arabic is a synthetic language.

The analytic language is a simple one; it determines the syntactic role of a word according to its place in the sentence, and if the place changes, the role changes.

Examples:

Adam helped Sarah.

Sarah helped Adam.

By changing the place of the noun “Adam,” its role changes from being the subject to being the object. And the same happens to the noun “Sarah” when it changes its place.

3 – Tendency to simplification:

The grammatical rules of Modern Egyptian are fewer than those of many other languages.

You will notice this when you learn Egyptian grammar, and if you compare it with the grammar of other languages, Eastern or Western, you will find it easier.

Similarly, Egyptian vocabulary is also light and simple.

Example:

Here are two sentences, one in Egyptian and one in Arabic, both meaning “Sarah went to the market.”

Egyptian: Sarah ra7et essou2.

Arabic: Zahabat Sarah Ela alssouq.

By comparing the two sentences, we will see some aspects of simplification in the Egyptian sentence, such as:

- Using Egyptian verb (ra7et) rather than Arabic verb (Zahabat) /ðahabat/
- Excluding the preposition: There is no preposition in the Egyptian sentence.

- Simplifying the pronunciation of the word “ssou2” in Egyptian, rather than “ssouq” in other Egyptian dialect and Arabic.

4 – Words of one or two letter(s)/sound(s):

This is very peculiar about the Egyptian language.

There are not too many of them, but some exist.

Example of one-letter/sound word:

ah = Yes

This word consists of one letter/sound: The letter representing the sound (a) ⲁ - the first letter of the hieroglyphic alphabet.

It is still present in Modern Egyptian with the same function, meaning “yes.”

Example of two-letter/sound word:

“ym” = Pond, lake, stream

5 – Simple and compound sentences:

A simple sentence consists of a subject, one verb, and an object (a subject and a predicate.)

Example:

Sarah rakba el3agala = Sarah is riding the bike.

A compound sentence contains two or more simple sentences in one.

Example:

Adam elmafrood ye3mel elwageb bass beyetfarrag 3akkora = Adam should be doing his homework, but he is watching a football game.

6 – Sentences always start with the subject (a noun):

This is one of the major differences between Egyptian and Arabic:

The noun-starting Egyptian sentence versus the verb-starting

Arabic sentence. In Arabic, a sentence mostly starts with a verb, and sometimes with a noun; in Egyptian, however, it always starts with a noun.

Example:

A Simple sentence like:

Sarah went to the market.

Egyptian: The sentence starts with “Sarah”.

Arabic: The sentence starts with “Went”.

7 – Root words are nouns:

A root is the simplest unit: The core of a word that cannot be reduced into smaller meaningful elements. It is the origin of Modern Egyptian words in Ancient Egyptian language.

Egyptian root words are always nouns, unlike Arabic and other languages, where root words are verbs.

Many words are derived from the root word, by adding prefixes or suffixes to form verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.

8 – Singular and Plural:

In Modern Egyptian, nouns, pronouns, and demonstrative pronouns are either singular (one) or plural (more than one.) Unlike Arabic, there is no form for only two in Modern Egyptian language.

Demonstrative pronouns:

Elbet di = This girl

Elbanat dol = These girls

Pronouns:

Enta šater = You are clever (masculine singular)

Ento šottar = You are clever (plural)

9 – Plural by adding: o

at the end of the word:

Salamo 3aleiko = Greetings / hello

10 – Plural by adding: w

as the second sound in the word:

2awadi (qawadi) = Cases

Ssawa2i = Water wheels

Nawa7i = Corners

11 – Plural by adding: wi

at the end of the word:

7akawi = Stories

Ahawi (qhawi) = Cafes

3'anawi = Songs

12 – Plural by adding: ah

at the end of the word:

7aramayah = Thieves

13 – Plural by adding: at

at the end of the word:

Banat = Girls

Ssettatt = Women

14 – Plural by adding: een

at the end of the word:

Mudarresseen = Teachers

15 – Plural by adding: an

at the end of the word:

şobyan = Boys

3oşyan = Sticks

16 – Plural

by masculinizing the feminine and feminizing the masculine:

Ragel = Man

Reggalah = Men

şagarah = Tree

şagar = Trees

17 – Plural of the exaggeration nouns:

La3eeb = Player

La3eebah = Players

Akkeel = Eater

Akkeelah = Eaters

18 – Plural by repeating

the last consonant sound of the word:

7etta = Piece

7ettat = Pieces

Otta (qtta) = Cat

Ottat (qttat) = Cats

19 – Variety of greetings:

šaba7 el7'eir = Good morning

šaba7 elward = Morning of roses

šaba7 elfol = Morning of jasmine

20 – Past tense passive form by adding prefix “En”:

Enkassafo = They were embarrassed

Enkašafo = They were revealed

Enza7o = They were expelled

21 – Past tense passive form by adding prefix “Et”:

Etwaham = He was deluded

Etwakasset = She was defeated

Etkabass = He was suppressed

Et7abasset = She was jailed

22 – Present simple and continuous tense by adding prefix “B”:

Bakol = I am eating

Byešrab = He is drinking

Btekteb = She is writing

Bnetefarrag = We are watching

Bey3'anno = They are singing

Bakteb še3r = I write poetry

23 – Past continuous tense

by adding an auxiliary verb to the present continuous tense:

Kont bakol = I was eating

Kan byešrab = He was drinking

Kanet btekteb = She was writing

Konna bnetfarrag = We were watching

Kano bey3'anno = They were singing

24 – Auxiliary verbs:

2am, ba2a, ra7

Ba2a 3ayez tenssany = So you want to forget me!

2amet ra7et essou2 = Then she went to the market.

Ra7 gayi bessor3ah = So he came quickly.

25 – Compound verbs

by adding a prefix or a suffix to the root word:

Prefix “b” in present continuous tense.

Example:

Benekteb = We are writing

Suffix “o” in present continuous tense

Example:

Beyektebo = They are writing

26 – Combined verbs:

Two verbs are combined to form one new verb.

Examples:

Ba3 (to sell) + 3aza2 (to plough) = ba3za2 (to scatter)

Na7'ar (to drill) + 7'arab (to destroy) = na7'rab (to ruin)

7'ata (to err) + 7'araf (to become senile) = 7'atraf (to lose one's sanity).

27 – Negation of past tense

by adding prefix “ma” and suffix “š” to the verb:

Ma7asalš = It did not happen.

Magaš = He did not come.

Makatabteš = I did not write.

28 – Negation of “Meš’

by adding “meš” before the verb:

Meš raye7 = I am not going.

Meš 3ayez = I do not want.

Meš kowayess = Not well

29 – Negation by “mafeeš”, “balaš”, or “malooš”:

Mafeeš akl = There is no food.

Balaš le3b = Do not play!

Malooš lazma = No need for it.

30 – Prepositions

“beta3”, “om”, “abu”, “Omat”:

Essawa2 beta3 el3arabeya = The driver of the car.

Elbet om feyonka = The girl with the bow.

Elwad abu ameess a7mar = The boy in the red shirt.

El3eyal omat do2oon = The kids with beards (derogatory expression).

31 – Comparison

“ešme3na”, “walla”, and “eiš”:

Ešme3na howa 7'ad elkebeera? = Why, of all of us, did he get the big piece?

Ana walla heya? = I or she?

Esh gab legab! = No comparison between this and that!

32 – Comparative adjectives “A” prefix:

A7ssan = Better

Aštar = Smarter

Atwal = Taller

33 – Preference - “walla”:

Tešoof elmatš walla elmossalssal = Do you want to watch the game or the series?

34 – Preference

by repetition and using plural form and/or exaggeration form:

Be7a2 we 7a2i2 = Truthfully

Besa7 we sa7i7 = Correctly

7elw 7alawa = So sweet

Gameel gamal = Very beautiful

Te3em ta3ama = So delicious

ša2i ša2awa = Very mischievous

35 – Choice

“ya ya”, “aw”, “walla”:

Ya tgeeni ya te2olly aro7lak = You either come to me or tell me to come to you.

Aw essma3 amma a2ollak = Or listen to me!

7ader walla 3'ayeb = Present or absent

36 – Relative pronoun “elly”:

There is only one relative pronoun in Modern Egyptian that is used with singular, plural, masculine, or feminine.

Examples:

Elwad elly beyegry = The boy who is running.

Elbet elly labssah a7mar = The girl who is wearing red.

Ennass elly ray7een ešo3'l = People who are going to work.

Ekketab elly feddorg = The book which is in the drawer.

37 – Continuous relative clauses

adding prefix “m” to the verb:

Elly mtkallemin 3aleha = The girl whom they are talking about

Elly messallemin 3aleih = The boy whom they are greeting

Elly mtannešin kalamoh = The person whom they are ignoring

38 – Gerund

by adding Prefix “m” to the verb:

Mekammelin = Continuing

Merawwa7in = Going home

Messtannyin = Waiting

39 – Exception

“ella” and “3'eir”:

Ella 3eyounak enta = Except your eyes

Mafeeš 3'erak yefarra7ny = No one but you can make me happy.

40 – Ambiguity/closure

“ay”, “a7a”, “a7eh”, “a7oh”, “ešo”:

Ay mal7ooza? = Which comment?

Ay kelma? = Any word?

Ešo ya7'ty? = Excuse me! (in a disagreeing, rude way)

Ya7'y a7a! = Really, Bruh! (in a disbelieving, rude way)

41 – Swear/oath w” /wə/:

Welmoş 7af = I swear by the Quran

Welmassee7 = I swear in the name of Christ

Wel3eiş welmal7 = I swear by the bread and salt (food that we ate together).

42 – Demonstrative pronouns

“da”, “di”, “dol”, “dola”, and “dokha”:

Demonstrative pronouns come after the noun.

Examples:

Elwad da = This boy.

Elbet di = This girl.

El3eyal dol = These kids.

Demonstrative pronouns come at the beginning of a sentence to refer to the subject when it was previously mentioned:

Example:

Dol kano aş 7abna = Those were our friends

43 – Criticism/disapproval

by repeating demonstrative pronouns:

Da šo3'l da? = Is this work?

Dol nass dol? = Are those people?

Di kora di? = Is that football?

44 – Interrogative pronouns

“ezzay”, “eih”, and “eish”:

Ezzay awseflak? = How can I describe it to you?

Eih ešot da? = What is this sound?

Interrogative pronouns do not have a specific place in the sentence; they can come at the beginning or later on.

Examples:

Eiš ya3ny? = What does it mean?

Ya3ny eih? = It means what?

Min enta? = Who are you?

Enta min? = You are who?

45 – Interrogative pronoun “leih”

asking about reason:

Leih 7'alletni a7ebbak = Why did you make me love you?

46 – Interrogative pronoun “emta”, “meta”, “kam”

asking about time:

Emta hate3raf enny ba7ebbak? When will you know that I love you?

Meta hašoofak? = When will I see you?

Essa3a kam? = What time is it?

47 – Interrogative pronouns “fein” and “menein”

asking about place:

Fein ekketab? = Where is the book?

Menein agib 3eiš? = From where can I get bread?

48 – Interrogative pronouns “kam” and “bekam”

asking about number or amount:

Kam marra? = How many times?

Bekam elward? = How much are the flowers?

49 – Interrogative pronoun “min”

asking about person:

Min yegaweb 3asso2al? = Who can answer the question?

50 – Interrogative pronouns about something missing

“enhu”, “enohu”, “nhun”, “anhu”, “anhi” :

Elnadi enhu? = Which club?

Elkorsi anhi? = Which chair?

El2otobees anhu? = Which bus?

51 – Intonation yes/no questions without interrogative pronouns:

Kalt? = You ate?

šerbet? = You drank?

Zakert? = You studied?

52 – Question with relative clause “elly”:

Min elly beyetkallam? = who is it that's speaking?

53 – Answering yes or no questions:

“ta”, “ay”, “ah”, “aywa”, “aywan” = Yes

Aywa gaiy = Yes, I'm coming.

“la2a”, “la”, “la2”, “la3” = No

La2a maro7tesh = No, I didn't go.

54 – Opinion:

Azon = I think that

Ba2ool = I say that

A3taqed = I believe that

Ra2yi = My opinion is

Ana šayef = I see that

55 – Continuity

“tamally”, “dayman”:

Tamalli ma3ak = I am always with you.

Dayman baroo7 henak = I always go there.

56 – Probability

“yemken”, “yenken”, “robbama”, “robbatan”:

Yemken 7'eir = Maybe it's for the best.

Yemken aroo7 = I may go.

57 – Similarity/comparison

“zaiy”, “ad”:

Kan beyegri zaiy el2arnab = He was running like a rabbit

Ba7ebbak ad eddonia = My love for you is as big as the whole world

58 – Similarity/continuity “bardo”

“bardak”, “bardic”, and “bardiky”:

Bardo 7adetek mossammema? = You're still insisting?

Wana bardo 3ayez akol = I also want to eat.

59 – Addition, continuity, and recentness

“kaman” and “lessah”:

Han3’anny kaman w kaman = We’ll sing again and again

Kaman shewayya = A little more

Wana kaman = Me too

Lessa mašy delwa2ty = He has just left now

Lessa faker? = You still remember?

60 – Affirmation:

Ommal tab3an = Yes, of course

Tamam = Sure

7ader = Okay

Akeed = For sure

E7na gamdeen awi = We are very strong.

61 – Affirmation by adding suffix “an”

at the end of words:

šokran = Thank you

Fe3lan = Actually

Geddan = Very

Faowran = Right away

62 – Reason/cause

“ekmen”, “3ašan”, “3alašan”:

Ekmennak 7elw = Because you are sweet

3ašan 7’argeen = Because we are going out

3alašan maleeš 3’eirak = Because I have no one but you

63 – Relation:

Beta3 = Of

Ebn = Son of

Bent = Daughter of

Abu = Father of

Om = Mother of

Goz = Husband of

Merat = Wife of

Examples:

Beta3 elna3na3 = Seller of mint

Bent ennass eltayebeen = Daughter of good people

64 – General (nonspecific) adjectives:

Adjectives do not necessarily match the gender of the word they describe. Sometimes they do; sometimes they do not.

Examples:

Wad (masculine) ammoor (masculine) = Handsome boy

Bet (feminine) 7elwa (feminine) = Pretty girl

Mostašfa (feminine) nedeef (masculine) = Clean hospital

Bantalon (masuline) to7fa (feminine) = Excellent pants

65 – Specific adjectives:

Some adjectives can never match the gender of the word they describe. They can only be said in one specific way.

This happens in sentences with “of”, relating two words together, whether it is appearing or hidden.

Examples:

Ello3'a (feminine) elmasry (masculine) = Egyptian Language.

Modaresset (feminine) el englizy (masculine) = English teacher.

Ello3'a beta3et elmasry = the language of the Egyptian.

Elmodaressah beta3et el englizy = the teacher of English.

66 – Calling someone

“ha”, “ya”, “2a”, “3ad”:

Ya Sarah = Sarah!

Ya Adam = Adam!

67 – Calling for help:

Gaai = ow! / ouch!

El7a2oony = Help!

3'etony = Save me!

Ya 7'araby, ya šataty, ya dahwety = Alas! Oh, dear! Oh, my goodness!

68 – Future tense

by adding “7a”, “ha”, or “3a” prefixes to the verb, depending on which Egyptian dialect:

7akteb, hakteb, 3akteb = I will write

69 – Satisfaction/completion

“bass”, “7'alass”, “7'aless”, “abadan”, and “kefaya”:

Talata bass = Only three

7'allašt 7'alaš = I finished; that's it.

El7essab 7'aleš = The bill has been fully paid

šebe3t; kalt kefaya = I'm full; I ate enough.

70 – Warning

“eyak”, “yak”, ew3a”, “7asseb”, “7’alli balak”:

Eyak asma3 şotak = Don’t you dare say anything!

Ew3a tekallemini = Don’t you dare speak to me!

7asseb 3ala kalamak = Careful what you say!

7’alli balak melli gambak = Careful, what is beside you!

71 – Hope/suggestion

“ya reit”, “balaş”, “bezyada”, and “3ad”:

Ya reit tesharrafounda = I hope you come visit.

Balaş te2ool keda = Please, don’t say that!

Bezyada 3ad! = Enough is enough!

72 – Wish

“ya reit”, “laow”:

Ya reit kont a2dar ateer = I wish I could fly.

Laow kont a2dar kont baneitlek 2aşr = If I could, I would build you a palace.

73 – Command/suggestion

by adding prefix “ma” to the verb:

Mate2ralak kelmetein = Go read a few words!

Matessma3 ekkalam ba2a = Listen to me for once!

Matbattal ra3’i ba2a = Stop talking! Would you?

74 – Reference

“keda”, “aho”, “aha”, “kedaho”, “kedahowan”, “kedahowat”:

El7ob keda = Love is like that.

75 – Praise/gratitude

“barawa”, “kawayess”, “šokran”:

Amma barawa 3aleik = Bravo! Well done!

Kowayess awi = Very good

šokran ya 7abiby = Thank you, my love!

76 – Completeness, quantity, amount

“temman”, “geddan”, “awi”, “7’aless”, “yama”:

El3eila kollaha hena temman = All the family are here.

Motšakker geddan = Thank you very much.

Ba7ebbek awi = I love you a lot.

Keteer 7’aleş = too much.

yama 3y0n šaḥlony = Many eyes attracted me.

77 – Big quantity/amount

by repeating one syllable in a word:

Rašraš = Sprinkle

Ratrat = Overflow

Fatfet = Crumble

Balbel = Damp

78 – Urgency “yalla”, “awam”:

yalla awam, awam yalla = Come Quickly - its from the song of Famous singer Laila Murad.

79 - Pampering adjectives “saggoom”

by conjugating the adjective in the form “saggoom”:

Sagam in ancient Egyptian means harmony.

In modern Egyptian, “saggoom” is used to conjugate adjectives when petting and pampering.

Examples:

Gammool = Beautiful

3assool = Sweet

šattoor = Clever

Ammoor = Cute

Tayyoob = Kind

80 – Nick names

in the form of “saggoomah”:

3addoolah, 3attoofah, Samssoomah, šaboo7ah, 3abboodah

81 – Nick names of religious “Islamic”

names in the form of “saggoomah”:

Zannoobah, 3ayyoošah, 7’addoogah, Maryoomah, Fattoomah

82 – Nick names with meanings from the ancient Egyptian language:

7ammo, Darš, Ssemssem / šušu, šaša, Zaza, Dudu, Zuzu, Susu, Fufu, etc.

83 – Praise - “ya”:

Ya 7alawtak ya gamalak = How beautiful!

Ya di elleila elhana = What a happy night!

84 – Exaggeration

adjectives for singular nouns in the form “saggiem”:

They are formed by doubling the second consonant sound in the word.

Examples:

Akkiel = Someone who enjoys eating

šarrieb = Someone who enjoys drinking

La33ieb = Someone who plays cleverly

Kassieb = Someone who makes good money

85 – Exaggeration – adjectives for plural

nouns in the form “saggiema”:

Akkiela = Those who enjoy eating

šarriebe = Those who enjoy drinking

La33ieba = Those who play cleverly

Kassieba = Those who make good money

86 – Cursing by names of animals:

Kalb = Dog

7omar = Donkey

Labwa = Lioness

7'aroof = Sheep

87 – Cursing by names of things:

Loo7 = Slab

7eita = Wall

Zebala = Garbage

88 – Cursing by shameful words:

3ars (similar to bastard)

Ba2f (similar to jerk)

Bagam (similar to moron)

Ssa7'eif (similar to silly)

89 – Cursing by parts of the body:

Koss ommak = Your mother's vagina (extremely derogatory)

90 - Most famous curse words:

Ebn ekkalb = son of a dog

Bent ekkalb = daughter of a dog

Welad ekkalb = children of a dog

91 – Pain:

ah, ay, ayi, oh = ow, ouch

92 – Mocking by imitating movements

93 – Mocking by imitating sounds

94 – Mocking by comparing:

Nofie7'a = Balloon

Bomba = Bomb

3agala = Wheel

2ebra = Needle

95 – Exclamation/admiration

“yama”, “ya”, “yah”, “yoh”:

Kan yama kan = Once upon a time

Ya 3alam ya hoh! = Hey, people!

Yah 3atta3ama = How delicious!

Yoh ma2darsh = Oh, I can't.

96 – Reproach

“yalli”, “ba2a”, “ya3ny 7’alaş”:

Yalli nassieny = You, who forgot me!

Ba2a 3ayez tenssany? = Oh, so now you want to forget about me?

Ya3ny 7’alaş nessiet? = So, you’ve already forgotten?

97 – Apology/regret

“2assef” or “ma3leš”:

2assef ya fandem = Sorry, Sir!

E7na assfien = We’re sorry!

Ma3leš 7a2ak 3alaya = Sorry, my bad!

98 – Conditional sentence

“en/ma”, “laow”, “enama”, and suggestion using “ma”:

En ma3amalteš elwageb, mafieš foss7a = Unless you do your homework, there is no break.

Laow maraddetš 3alayya meš 7akallemtak tany = If you don’t answer me, I’m not talking to you again.

Enama tigy w matssallemš yab2a 3’alat = To come over and not say hello, that’s not right.

Ma t2oom ba2a 3ašan nel3ab = Get up, so we go play!

99 – Imperative sentence

commands, prohibitions, requests, instructions:

Matetkallemš 2abl ma yetkallem abook = Don’t speak before your dad does!

Ma7addeš yakol 2abl ma yeşally = No one eats before they pray!

Mabalaš ellon da ma3aya = Stop this behaviour with me!

100 – Acknowledgement, acceptance

sequence, and continuity - “tayeb”, “tab”, “tah”, “bass”, “enama”:

Tayeb mowafe2 = Okay, I agree.

Tab estannani shewayaya = Okay, wait for me for a bit!

Tah gai 7alan = Okay, I’m coming right now

Bass essma3 = But listen!

Enama leṣabr 7dood = But there are limits to patience.

101 – Asking for patience

“esstanna”, “oṣbor”, “ṣon”:

Esstannani = Wait for me!

Oṣbor 3al2akl yesstewi = Wait on the food to cook!

Ṣn shewayaya! = Wait a little!

102 – Adverbs of place:

Fo2 (foq) = Above

Ta7t = Below

3ala = On

Wara = Behind

Oddam = In front of

Gamb = Beside

Gowwa = Inside

Barra = Outside

Hena = Here

Henak = There

2abl = Before

Ba3d = After

Ma3a = With

103 – Adverbs of time:

Leil = Night

Messa = Evening

şob7 = Morning

Nahar = Daytime

Sanya = Second

De2ie2a = Minute

Ssa3a = Hour

Yom = Day

Essboo3 = Week

şahr = Month

Sana = Year

104 – Descriptive adverbs with prepositions:

Men fo2 = From above

Men ta7t = From below

3ala hena = Over here

3ala henak = Over there

105 – Definite articles

“2el” and “2e + doubling the first consonant”:

2elwara2 = The paper

2elmakan = The place

2esset = The woman

2erragel = The man

106 – Indefinite article (no article):

Falla7 kan maši = A farmer was walking.

107 – Combined conjunctions

“7a+kem”, “del+wa2t+y”, “ma+3leh+š”:

7akem elzohoor zay esstattat = As flowers are like women

3ayza akol delwa2ty = I want to eat now.

108 – Repeating the letter

in writing when doubling the sound in pronunciation:

šarrieb = Someone who drinks a lot

7arrief = Someone who is very clever

šarrief = Someone who spends money generously

109 – Subject pronouns:

Ana = I

Enta = You (masculine singular)

Enti = You (feminine singular)

Ento = You (plural)

E7na = We

Howwa = He

Heyya = She

Homma = They

Subject pronouns come separately before verbs in sentences:

Examples:

Ana zay mana = I am the same

Enta el7ob = You are love

Enti 3amalti elwageb = You did your homework

Ento ray7in el7afla = You are going to the party

E7na elmasreyyin = We are the Egyptians

110 – Object pronouns:

Y = Me

Ak = You (masculine singular)

Ek = You (feminine singular)

Na = Us

h = Him

Ha = Her

Hom = Them

Object pronouns are tied to the end of verbs as suffixes.

Examples:

Kallemny = Call me!

Howwa 3allemak = He taught you (masculine singular)

Howwa bey7ebbek = He loves you (feminine singular)

Homma warrona essekka = They showed us the way

Ana kallemtah = I called him

Ana kallemtaha = I called her

E7na 3azamnahom = We invited them

111 – Prefixes

“ess”, “et”, “en” at the beginning of verbs:

Essta7’abba = Hide

Essta3'atta = Cover up

Etfaddal = Come on in

Et7addar = Get ready

Enşerfo = leave

Enketem = shut up

112 – Suffixes

“sh”, “n”, “en”, “ha”, “y”, “gy”, “ly” :

113 – Switching

similarly-produced sounds of words in different Egyptian dialects:

Ssagara / šagara = Tree

Far2 / fal2 = Part, split

Momken / monken = Maybe

Nataq / natag = Utter

Goan / goal = Goal

Gornal / gornan = Newspaper

Geiš / deiš = Army

114 – Sliding

from one sound to another of words in different Egyptian dialects:

2ool / gool = Say

Nafa7 / nafa7' = Blow

3eyar / 3'eyar = Measure

115 – Flipping

the place of sounds of words in different Egyptian dialects:

Araneb / anareb = Rabbits

Goz / zog = Husband

Tamween / tawmeen = Supply

La7'bat / 7'arbat / 7'albat = To mess up

116 – Trimming sounds in pronunciation:

Meš ssame3 - messame3 = I'm not hearing

šiel ro7ak - šierro7ak = Brace (hold) yourself

3abd el7alim - 3ab7alem = A person's name

117 – Diminutive nouns:

Of a child: nunu, so3'annan

118 – Indefinite adjectives

of number and quantity:

7abba = A few/ a little / some

7etta = A piece of

šewaya = A few / a little / some

Keteer = Many / much

119 – Metaphorical idioms:

Referring to words or expressions that mean something different from their literal definition.

Example:

ša3'3'al bedra3oh = He is working with his arm (literal translation) –

He does not have a specific craft or profession (actual meaning)

120 – Homophones:

Words that sound the same but have different meanings.

Examples:

Kossa = Zucchini (vegetable)

Kossa = Favouritism / discrimination

121 – Definite numerical adjectives:

They always come before the noun.

Examples:

Awel so2al = First question

Tany 7aga = Second thing

Talet šare3 = Third street

Rabe3 door = Fourth floor

122 – Conjunctions

Tools for connecting and adjusting sentences:

All the conjunctions, which were previously explained, connect and adjust sentences, like the tools of workers, farmers, doctors, teachers, and engineers. They help facilitate work and reduce time and effort. The language tools help keep sentences coherent and convey meanings easily.

Giving some conjunctions specific names, such as interrogative pronouns, prepositions, etc., is just to classify them according to their functions, but in the end, they all connect and adjust sentences.

Example:

“fe” is found in hieroglyphic writing meaning the same as in Modern Egyptian. In hieroglyphic, it’s represented by the viper letter for the sound “f”.

Example:

Feggon = To the goal

123 – Writing every sound:

In modern Egyptian writing, every sound is represented by a letter:

We write words exactly as we pronounce them.

124 – Dental consonants:

Egyptians do not stick out their tongues to pronounce such sounds. According to Egyptian culture, sticking out the tongue is considered impolite.

This idea was established because it was a means to distinguish between the Egyptian and the foreigner.

On the contrary, dental consonants do exist in Arabic tongue.

This is one of many major differences between Egyptian and Arabic languages.

Examples:

Ta3lab (Egyptian) vs Tha3lab (Arabic) = Fox

ṣeqa (Egyptian) /Theqa (Arabic) = Confidence

Naddara (Egyptian) vs Nazara (Arabic) = Eyeglasses

Gedr (Egyptian) vs Gezr (Arabic) = Root

125 – Suggestion of a unique alphabet for writing Modern Egyptian:

(1) a	آ (أ)	
(2) ă	آ (آ)	
(3) ā	بدل الفتح، ومد الآد	
(4) i	بدل الكسرة، ومد اليه	حروف
(5) y	يه (ي)	كتابة
(6) C	عين (ع)	اللغة
(7) b	به (ب)	المصري
(8) f	فه (ف)	
(9) V	في (ف)	
(10) w	واو (و)	32 حرف
(11) o	بدل الضمة، ومد الواو	
(12) m	ميم (م)	حسب
(13) n	نون (ن)	النطق الحالي
(14) r	ره (ر)	وقريب من
(15) h	هه (ه)	القديم
(16) ħ	حه (ح)	
(17) ħ	خه (خ)	
(18) ħ	عين (ع)	
(19) s	سين (س)	سامي حرك
(20) š	شين (ش)	
(21) š	صا (ص)	برمهايات 6265
(22) K	كا (ك)	
(23) K	قا (ق)	
(24) g	جا (ج)	
(25) j	جي (ج)	
(26) t	ته (ت)	
(27) t	طه (ط)	
(28) t	تنش	
(29) d	ضه (ض)	
(30) d	دبت (د)	
(31) z	زه (ز)	
(32) z	ظه (ظ)	

The booklet provides a guide for writing Modern Egyptian in Nabataean alphabet to keep it unique and distinguishable from Arabic, which also uses the same Nabataean alphabet.

ah/ a

aa/ ă

~/ ä

~/ i

yeh/ y

ein/ c

beh/ b

feh/ f

vi/ v

waw/ w

~/ o

mim/ m

non/ n

- reh/ r

- heh/ h

- hah/ ħ

- khah/ ḥ
- ghin/ ħ
- sin/ s
- shin/ š
- sad/ ṣ
- kaf/ k
- qaf/ Q
- gim/ g
- je/ j
- teh/ t
- tah/ ṭ
- dah/ ḍ
- dit/ d
- zih/ z
- zah/ ḏ
- tish/ ṭ

Index

Message from the Translator	7
1 – No parsing in Modern Egyptian:	8
2 – Analytic language:	8
3 – Tendency to simplification:	9
4 – Words of one or two letter(s)/sound(s):	10
5 – Simple and compound sentences:	10
6 – Sentences always start with the subject (a noun):	10
7 – Root words are nouns:	11
8 – Singular and Plural:	11
9 – Plural by adding: o	12
10 – Plural by adding: w	12
11 – Plural by adding: wi	12
12 – Plural by adding: ah	12
13 – Plural by adding: at	12
14 – Plural by adding: een	13
15 – Plural by adding: an	13
16 – Plural	13
17 – Plural of the exaggeration nouns:	13
18 – Plural by repeating	13
19 – Variety of greetings:	14
20 – Past tense passive form by adding prefix “En”:	14
21 – Past tense passive form by adding prefix “Et”:	14
22 – Present simple and continuous tense by adding prefix “B”:	14
23 – Past continuous tense	14
24 – Auxiliary verbs:	15
25 – Compound verbs	15
26 – Combined verbs:	15
27 – Negation of past tense	16
28 – Negation of “Meš’	16
29 – Negation by “mafeeš”, “balaš”, or “malooš”:	16
30 – Prepositions	16
31 – Comparison	16
32 – Comparative adjectives “A” prefix:	17
33 – Preference - “walla”:	17
34 – Preference	17
35 – Choice	17
36 – Relative pronoun “elly”:	18
37 – Continuous relative clauses	18
38 – Gerund	18
39 – Exception	18
40 – Ambiguity/closure	19
41 – Swear/oath w” /wə/:	19

42 – Demonstrative pronouns	19
43 – Criticism/disapproval	19
44 – Interrogative pronouns	20
45 – Interrogative pronoun “leih”	20
46 – Interrogative pronoun “emta”, “meta”, “kam”	20
47 – Interrogative pronouns “fein” and “menein”	20
48 – Interrogative pronouns “kam” and “bekam”	21
49 – Interrogative pronoun “min”	21
50 – Interrogative pronouns about something missing	21
51 – Intonation yes/no questions without interrogative pronouns:	21
52 – Question with relative clause “elly”:	21
53 – Answering yes or no questions:	21
54 – Opinion:	22
55 – Continuity	22
56 – Probability	22
57 – Similarity/comparison	22
58 – Similarity/continuity “bardo”	22
59 – Addition, continuity, and recentness	23
60 – Affirmation:	23
61 – Affirmation by adding suffix “an”	23
62 – Reason/cause	23
63 – Relation:	24
64 – General (nonspecific) adjectives:	24
65 – Specific adjectives:	24
66 – Calling someone	25
67 – Calling for help:	25
68 – Future tense	25
69 – Satisfaction/completion	25
70 – Warning	26
71 – Hope/suggestion	26
72 – Wish	26
73 – Command/suggestion	26
74 – Reference	26
75 – Praise/gratitude	27
76 – Completeness, quantity, amount	27
77 – Big quantity/amount	27
78 – Urgency “yalla”, “awam”:	27
79 – Pampering adjectives “saggoom”	27
80 – Nick names	28
81 – Nick names of religious “Islamic”	28
82 – Nick names with meanings from the ancient Egyptian language:	28
83 – Praise - “ya”:	28
84 – Exaggeration	28
85 – Exaggeration – adjectives for plural	29

86 – Cursing by names of animals:	29
87 – Cursing by names of things:	29
88 – Cursing by shameful words:	29
89 – Cursing by parts of the body:	30
90 – Most famous curse words:	30
91 – Pain:	30
92 – Mocking by imitating movements	30
93 – Mocking by imitating sounds	30
94 – Mocking by comparing:	30
95 – Exclamation/admiration	30
96 – Reproach	31
97 – Apology/regret	31
98 – Conditional sentence	31
99 – Imperative sentence	31
100 – Acknowledgement, acceptance	32
101 – Asking for patience	32
102 – Adverbs of place:	32
103 – Adverbs of time:	33
104 – Descriptive adverbs with prepositions:	33
105 – Definite articles	33
106 – Indefinite article (no article):	34
107 – Combined conjunctions	34
108 – Repeating the letter	34
109 – Subject pronouns:	34
110 – Object pronouns:	35
111 – Prefixes	35
112 – Suffixes	36
113 – Switching	36
114 – Sliding	36
115 – Flipping	36
116 – Trimming sounds in pronunciation:	37
117 – Diminutive nouns:	37
118 – Indefinite adjectives	37
119 – Metaphorical idioms:	37
120 – Homophones:	37
121 – Definite numerical adjectives:	38
122 – Conjunctions	38
123 – Writing every sound:	39
124 – Dental consonants:	39
125 – Suggestion of a unique alphabet for writing Modern Egyptian:	40